

# THE CHRONICLE.

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Clarksville, Tenn., June 6, 1890.

TERMS: \$5.00 IN ADVANCE.

Conventions of 1890.

Republican National Convention, Chicago, Wednesday, June 5.

Democratic National Convention, Cincinnati, June 22.

Tennessee Republican State Convention, Wednesday, May 29.

State Democratic Convention, to appoint delegates to the Cincinnati Convention and select Presidential electors, Tuesday, June 10.

State Democratic Convention, to nominate a candidate for Governor, Tuesday, August 10.

## The Constitution Against the Empire.

ACADEMICAL WEEK.

This is the week in which our

academic institutions make their

annual demonstration, and so much

of the greatness and prosperity of

Clarksville is involved in her position

as a center of education that during

that week all other interests

relate into the background. It is

well, and as journals are nothing

but the reflex of society, our columns

too shall be mainly reserved for

commencement exercises.

The week commenced worthily

on Sunday with

TWO COMMENCEMENT SERMONS.

These were assigned to the two

men who, perhaps better than any

other men, were able to command

public attention in Clarksville. In

the morning Dr. J. B. West delivered

the commencement sermon to the

graduating class of the Female

Academy, and Dr. Palmer, in the

evening, presided to the graduates

of the S. W. P. University.

Dr. West threatened to draw our

first attention. It has been said that

a prophet is never a prophet in his

own country, but assuredly the

prophet has to be reversed in the

case of Dr. West. We know well

that his profound thought, deep

religious fervor, and sympathetic

warmth of appeal, command the

attention of the best intellects

wherever he speaks, but it is in

Clarksville that he preaches at his

best. Elsewhere he is received as a

distinguished divine, here as a

beloved father, who, after a long

absence, is welcomed home by his

children, who yearn to hear again

the words of sympathy and counsel

as they fall from his mouth. He

happily reminded the girls whom

he addressed that he had himself

gone to school with their grand-

parents, and came among them as to a

home tenanted with a happy family of

his children and his children's children.

He told them that he did not intend

to occupy them with the weary

routine of topics customarily dealt

with in commencement exhorta-

tions, such as woman's mission, etc.,

etc., but would endeavor to give

them such instruction as would fur-

ther their against the perils of a

restless, skeptical, questioning era.

He chose his text therefore from

John, v., 7: "What I do thou knowest

not now, but thou shalt know here-

after."

This text naturally suggests the

limitations of human knowledge in

the present state compared with the

flood of light that may be anticipated

when we shall look upon all no

longer as in a glass darkly, but face

to face. He applied the principle to

our knowledge of the material

universe, to our knowledge of the

moral government of the world, and

to our knowledge of God. The

universal attestation of men engaged

in the study of nature was quoted in

support of the first principle, all of

whom acknowledged that the

illimitable unknown as a rival to

the ocean. Kepler's laws of mo-

tion, which are now taught to boys

and girls in our public schools, were

once justly hailed as the grandest

the light which beams from the

face of God, and clear up all mys-

teries, which difficulties and recog-

nize apparent contradictions; but

here the reporter cannot follow him,

for it requires the eloquent enthu-

siasm of the preacher to do justice

to the subject, and that is unattain-

able by us.

DR. PALMER.

In the evening, at the Presby-

terian church, Dr. Palmer preached

the commencement sermon to the

students of the S. W. P. University.

The large and beautiful building

was crowded; we doubt whether

there was a vacant seat in it. At

the Methodist church in the morn-

ing Mr. Barbee had announced that

there would be no evening service,

in order that the congregation might

have the opportunity of hearing Dr.

Palmer.

The text was taken from the ad-

dress of the apostle Paul upon the

Areopagus at Athens to the Athe-

nian people, with special reference

to the sentence—

"That they might seek the Lord, if

they might feel after him and find

him."—Acts xvii, 27.

We feel that we are doing injus-

tice to this sublime discourse in

attempting to give even an abstract

of it.

His first allusion to the

special brevity of the expression

"feeling after God" upon the people

to whom the discourse of Paul was

addressed, the people of Athens, in-

tellectually the keenest and bright-

est among the nations, normally the

lightest and most frivolous. He

pointed to their eagerness to hear

him when they understood him to be

a so-called foreigner (that is, a

foreigner), a new religion being

always a welcome thing to them as

something to talk and argue about.

In view of this eagerness to hear

anything new about the gods, the

preacher found a mournful pathos

about the expression "feeling after

him" as characterizing a people too

intelligent to be satisfied with the

mythic fables which contained all

that they had heard of religion, and

yet destitute of that moral depth of

character, "that spiritual insight

which recognizes the divine spirit

when once contact with it is ob-

tained; and so we have a graphic

picture of a people ever feeling after

God and never finding him.

Then he came to a wider applica-

tion of the idea. He maintained

that it was the irrepressible impulse

of every nation and every indi-

vidual that had any capacity for

good whatever it be reaching out

after something better, purer, holier,

stronger than itself. It was the en-

dless way of exemplifying this prin-

ciple that manifested the incessant

resources of the speaker—unfor-

tunately the very copiousness of

the illustrations makes it impossible

for us to give even an abstract of

them.

Thus he observed that all science

is a reaching and feeling after God.

Facts and phenomena, however

great their number, if contemplated

each separately from the others do

not constitute science, but when

they are studied in reference to their

mutual dependencies one upon the

other immediately we find an in-

stant aroused which demands a

unity of purpose which, when elicit-

ed and defined, becomes law, and

law, when truly understood, is

either nothing or it is the will of

God, the manifestation of the Cre-

ator's attributes in the Creator's

work. When, again, law and public

morals are studied, we find that we

are aiming to treat human motives

on universal principles, principles ap-

plyable to all cases, and we are

striving so far as we can to make

our laws and moral maxims accord-

ant with those principles of human

nature which are universal; but

these principles were implanted in

humanity by God's authority; con-

sequently what we are really striving

to carry out is the will of God.

And in like manner those who

make beauty the object of their

search and endeavor to define the

principles of aesthetic art, are really

aiming at the realization of the

divine mind itself, which is the

ultimate type of ideal beauty. The

unhappy circumstance of all these

instances was shown to be that,

while we cannot reach out our hand

in any direction for the better with-

out coming in direct contact with

divinity, yet so rarely do we recog-

nize it when found. He defined the

dividing line between truth and

error, between right and wrong to

be the recognition of this very

truth, while happiness or mis-

ery depends upon its apprehension.

The sermon concluded with a

forceful picture of the fate of that

soul which eventually fails to find

God. Of this we will not attempt

to convey an idea to our readers.

It was a piece of impassioned elo-

quence such as can only proceed

from the lips of a great orator, but

from such lips it must be heard or

it is lost altogether.

ORATORS OF THE LITERARY SOCI-

ETIES.

On Monday night the cabinet

building was occupied by the repre-

sentatives of the Stewart and Wash-

ington Irving literary societies,

which each put forward two speak-

ers. Messrs. C. B. Harris and G.

W. Merritt appeared in behalf of

the Stewart, while Messrs. W. D.

Turnley and L. L. Grigsby were

the chosen speakers from the Wash-

ington Irving society.

Mr. Harris discussed "It is better

to be totally forgotten than to be

remembered to be execrated." Mr.

Merritt spoke upon "Where there's

a will there's a way," while Messrs.

Turnley and Grigsby had chosen as

their subjects respectively, "There

are no birds in last year's nest,"

and "Hero-worship."

It has been thought by many that

there is no trace of advancement

and proficiency than that indicat-

ed by the status of the literary

societies of a university. The mem-

bers are thrown upon their own

resources, and these exercises illus-

trate more nearly than any other

college exercise the real battle of

life. Judged by this test, we con-

gratulate the university on the work

done in the past year. The young

gentlemen discussed their subjects

with careful thought and earnest-

ness. Abandoning the sometimes

sophomoric style used by students,

they devoted themselves to extract-

ing the thoughts and real lessons

suggested by their subjects.

At the close of the speaking, Mr.

J. West, in a few words, presented

address, presented to Mr. Blackburn,

of the Stewart society, the badge of

the society, conferred on him as the

member, who had made the greatest

proficiency in speaking during the

past session; while Mr. L. N. Rhodes,

with a few remarks, presented to

Mr. Howerton the badge of the

Washington Irving society, for a

like reason.

Diplomas of the societies were

also presented to Messrs. Mooney,

Price and Carthel, of the Wash-

ington Irving society, and Messrs.

Telle, Merritt, Rick and C. S. Hy-

land of the Stewart society. This

ceremony was performed by the

Rev. J. N. Craig, who prefaced it

by a short but eloquent address.

The audience was then dismissed

by Dr. Waddell, highly delighted

with the exercises.

EXERCISES OF THE GRADUATES.

Four young gentlemen were en-

titled to a hearing as graduates on

Tuesday morning. These were—

Mr. James Eldon Carthel, of

Trenton, Tenn. Subject—"The Cru-

cades."

Mr. Wm. M. Cox, of Mississippi.

Subject—"Poetry, its Nature and

Mission."

Mr. James Francis Johnson, of

Gallatin, Tenn. Subject—"Sympa-

thy."

Mr. William D. Mooney, of Clark-

sville, Tenn. Subject—"Sham Sentiment."